

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace the claims with the claims provided in the listing below wherein status, amendments, additions and cancellations are indicated.

1. (Original) A connecting structure for piping members, characterized in that a first piping member having a channel therein, the first piping member having at least one of a first joint surface on the periphery of which at least one of a first opening in communication with said channel and with a first annular groove is provided and a second piping member having a channel therein, the second piping member having at least one of a second joint surface on the periphery of which at least one of a second opening in communication with said channel and with a second annular groove is provided are connected tightly sealing through a basically cylindrical sleeve, wherein a thinner-walled sleeve with flanges on both ends thereof on the periphery of which elastic bodies are fitted is press inserted into said first and second annular grooves.

2. (Original) A connecting structure for piping members according to claim 1, wherein the first and second piping members are connected together by connecting members for connecting the first and second joint surfaces together or

a connecting member for connecting upper or undersides of the first and second piping members.

3. (Original) A connecting structure for piping members according to claim 1, wherein joint fitting portions are formed in the first and second joint surfaces of the first and second piping members respectively and the members are connected through joints fixed into the fitting portions with pins.

4. (Currently amended) A connecting structure for piping members according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the first piping member and/or the second piping member are any of a valve, fitting, mixer, pump, flowmeter, and various types of sensors.